

Intro ([00:02](#)):

Welcome to Real Money Real Experts, a podcast where leading financial counseling and coaching experts share their stories, their challenges, and their advice for helping people manage money in the real world. I'm your host, Rachel DeLeon, Executive Director of the Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education or AFCPE®. And I'm your co-host, Dr. Mary Bell Carlson, an Accredited Financial Counselor, or AFC®, and the President of Financial Behavior Keynote Group. Every episode we're taking a deep dive in the topics that personal finance professionals care about, helping clients, building community, and your professional growth. Andy Hill is the award-winning family finance coach behind Marriage, Kids and Money, a platform dedicated to helping young families build wealth and happiness. Andy's advice and personal finance experience have been featured in major media outlets like CNBC, Forbes MarketWatch, Kiplinger's Personal Finance, and NBC News. With millions of podcast downloads and video views, Andy's message of family financial empowerment has resonated with listeners, readers, and viewers across the world. When he is not talking money, Andy enjoys being a soccer dad, singing karaoke with his wife and watching Marvel movies. Welcome Andy to the show.

Andy Hill ([01:24](#)):

Thank you so much for having me, Mary and Rachael. I appreciate it.

Rachael DeLeon ([01:27](#)):

Yeah, welcome. Andy, we like to kick it off with you. Kind of taking us back to the beginning, tell us a little bit about your personal finance journey and what inspired you to move along this path to help other young families build wealth and happiness.

Andy Hill ([01:42](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. Well, I would say I give a lot of credit to my daughter who inspired my personal finance journey, because when my wife and I got married, we were in our late twenties and we were living for today and having a lot of fun and going out and doing concerts and restaurants and things like that. And it wasn't until we learned that we were going to be parents that something sort of clicked in my brain and it's like, okay, I'm not just taking care of myself and having a lot of fun. We are literally bringing a human into this world, and we needed to make sure that she has a great life. And for me, that was finances for some reason. I think I enjoyed talking about money. I think I liked planning about money, but I never, and the, and the previous few years, I really was just like spending all of it that came in. I was making maybe like, you know, \$60,000. And then when I got married to my wife, it automatically doubled and we had doubled the amount of money, so it was so much more money to have fun. And I just, we, we lost ourselves in the romance of the, the first portion of our relationship, which was great. No regrets at all. It was fantastic. But with that knowledge of, okay, well, I used to be fine living on the 60 by myself, and then when Nicole came in, we, we are now, we're using all of it. What if we just sorta saved one of our incomes and then just did some incredibly cool things to help our daughter just have a great life, a better life than we had, you know, and just kind of build this family tree for generations to come. So that was sort of the, the start of our personal finance journey together as a couple. And then we did some pretty cool things over the next 10, 12 years to give our kids a great life and, and turn give ourselves a great financial life as well.

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([03:21](#)):

Andy, tell me more about your wife. Is she also part of the business or is this more your thing?

Andy Hill ([03:26](#)):

My wife is, is begrudgingly a part of the business? Yeah, she, she doesn't, she doesn't, she doesn't wanna have anything to do with it, but I'm really annoying. So <laugh>, no, uh, I mean, all joking aside, uh, from the beginning, you know, this has been a partnership of us doing some, uh, fun personal finance things. I call it fun. She calls it nerdy and annoying <laugh> things to help, you know, give ourselves a great life, you know, whether that's paying off our debt or becoming mortgage free or building our net worth to a place where we're feeling very comfortable. Uh, and along the journey as I've turned this from, you know, hobby and way to build wealth for my family, turned into a side hustle, turned into a full-time business. I've, you know, talked to my wife along the whole way, Hey, wouldn't it be cool if we did some of this stuff together? Maybe we could do podcasts together. No, no, no. Andy, leave me alone. I am not interested in that boring stuff that you've got going on. Uh, but honestly, she's, she's been so kind along the way and every once in a while she'll join the show and for periods of time during the pandemic, we would do a, a podcast together. So she's fantastic and is a good ying to my yang of, of nerdy mindness. And she's, she's my opposite of, Hey man, let's also live for today and enjoy life too, which is just a great balance. Yeah. When it comes to being in a marriage.

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([04:39](#)):

Yeah, I can second that. It always takes the other opposite side to make it all balanced. <laugh>. That's funny. Now, Andy, you did a little bit of everything. So you're a podcaster, you're a public speaker, you also are a family financial coach. You do a little bit of everything. So tell us, what tips do you have for other entrepreneurs that are looking to do similar things that you're doing?

Andy Hill ([05:00](#)):

Yeah. Well, I would say, uh, the, the reason that I'm excited about doing all the things, all the random things that I'm doing is that I'm just really passionate about the topic. I think personally I have a lot of interest in learning more about family finance and helping people along the way so that, that general interest in, in, and a desire to continue to learn as well as a desire to help people is really what drives me because it can be tiring to do all these different things that I'm doing. I mean, you named three things. I probably have seven other things that I like, you know, try to do at either do well at or fail at. But I, I, I, I think that, uh, my general interest in, in, in those areas of, of learning more and helping people is what keeps me moving forward. So I guess advice for others out there, if you're gonna be going down the path of coaching or helping people or in, in any capacity, make sure you really care about the topic, uh, because you're gonna be doing a lot of it <laugh> and you know, over time that's okay, okay, you can change over time. But I think that, uh, when you're really delving into a certain area, uh, enjoying it is, is, is has helped me to move forward at least.

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([06:06](#)):

Yeah. And can you break down a little bit of your business more like what is the biggest revenue creator for you? What do you do because you love it and have fun, but maybe doesn't bring in as much money? Kind of help us understand what those steps are for your business and how you've set it

Andy Hill ([06:20](#)):

Up. Yeah, I, I like to think of it from a revenue side of things, cuz that, that helps me at least, uh, since I'm <laugh> a numbers guy. Um, I would say at this point in time, I would say maybe 60% of my revenue comes in from freelance work, whether that is freelance video creation, freelance writing, um, you know, like you said, speaking things like that, things that are contract for other people's businesses or

other people's websites. And the other 40% is coaching, it is creating content on my site and then in turn selling advertising, sponsorships, affiliate marketing, that sort of way. So I would say I'm probably 60 40 in content creation for other people, and then 40% in coaching and content creation on my platforms.

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([07:08](#)):

And what I hear you saying on that too is a lot of it is content creation. Yes. That is really, so I know a lot of people that are interested in like, Hey, I wanna do this or I wanna do that, but if on the influence side, it's content, content content, yeah. And if you don't have content, there's not much there. Is that correct?

Andy Hill ([07:25](#)):

Absolutely. It is, it is. It's a, it's a marketing medium of course, to draw people into my coaching services, which is probably, I mean, 10% of my revenue, but it also can be an outlet for coaching, you know, so you're still coaching by creating content that's helpful to people that in turn, if there's a way to make advertising dollars off of that or sponsorship dollars or, or promote a product or service that you truly believe in or use or trust or, or just like their mission, um, in, in the form of sponsorships or affiliates. So I, I see that as a, as a form of coaching as well, just in a different fashion.

Rachael DeLeon ([07:59](#)):

Andy, when you started out and this was a side hustle or a little bit of a passion project, were there people in the field that really supported you or that you learned how to build this more into a full-time business?

Andy Hill ([08:11](#)):

Yes, absolutely. We have, we have such a great community, we really do. Just people who are on a similar mission to help people win with money. And when I started out, it was quite literally a hobby. I was having a bad day at work and I needed something besides my job, and I needed something besides, uh, you know, I love my kids, but it was, we had a four year old and a two year old at the time. So outside of work, it was like, come home at six after a really grueling day. And then it's like, hey, get straight to work being a dad, you know, and that, that, that's things I, I love, I love my kids, but there wasn't a lot of time for me, <laugh>, there wasn't a lot of time for stuff that I was interested in. Uh, by the time I was done, dad, I was exhausted and I wanted to go to bed. Right. You know, so I'm like, okay, what else can I do in the wee hours of the morning or the late, you know, evening to just have a little bit of something that I'm interested in and, and, you know, um, I'm adjusting my glasses right now. I'm a nerdy money guy. So I'm like, well, what can I do to, to do that? So I started a podcast, I started a blog, and then immediately found this community of like-minded people that wanted to talk about the same thing to help their families build wealth. Uh, folks like Elle Martinez from Couple Money, she's also got a podcast called Simplify and Enjoy. She was so kind to me in the beginning that it was like, wow, is she gonna be asking me for my credit card number shortly? Like, what is this, what is this unending kindness and goodness that is out there? And it wasn't just al it was other people, Joe Saul-Sehy just great people out there that have this mission to help people with their money. And anybody who else was waving their hands saying they're interested in joining along, they saw this as a recruit in, in the, in the world of, of family finance and, and personal finance and just welcome people with open arms and just giving them guidance along the way on how to be successful. Found a lot of that joy through the FinCon community in general. I know I named those two individuals, but there were dozens and dozens of

others who opened their arms and, and helped me to be successful. And, and that, that came through the, the FinCon community as well.

Rachael DeLeon ([10:13](#)):

You mentioned, you know, early on that you had this desire to learn and desire to help that really fueled you into this field. And I think that those two things are very prevalent in the field. And, and I think that's why you see, you know, there's this feeling of abundance rather than scarcity. As we grow the field and the more people like you, the more people we're helping, the more people were delivering this education too, which is fantastic.

Andy Hill ([10:38](#)):

Absolutely. Yeah, definitely a, a feeling in our community of, of collaboration over competition for sure.

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([10:44](#)):

So Andy, your website is Marriage, Kids and Money. How old are your kids now and when did you first start teaching them about money?

Andy Hill ([10:52](#)):

My daughter, Zoe is gonna be 11 next week, and my son Calvin is eight. And when I started to talk to him about money, oh man, as soon as they'd listen, no, um, probably, you know, in that, in that 3, 4, 5 range, I mean, it didn't need to be hardcore conversations, really, it's just every day dealings with money needs versus wants, how much does this stuff cost at the grocery store? And, and, and which sh which stuff should we put back because maybe we don't need right now versus the things that we maybe want. And I think a lot of those conversations started very early, and my kids <laugh>, you know, just like my wife, uh, begrudgingly have come along to, uh, learn that these things are important and they have a big factor in our overall happiness in life. You know, money is the tool that can help us to do a lot of these things, but that's all it is. It's just a tool. It doesn't need to be praised or, or glorified more than that. It just helps us to move towards the life that, that we want to have. And I'm trying to teach my kids that, uh, definitely at an early age and now that they're approaching preteens, <laugh>, <laugh> and all that goes along with that too. So <laugh>,

Rachael DeLeon ([12:04](#)):

Of your two children, has there been one over the other that has really embraced learning about money or are both still sort of at that age where their eye rolls for dad?

Andy Hill ([12:13](#)):

You know, they've both been very, not very much eye rolls, but very, uh, open to conversation. So, [Rachael: that's fantastic.] Once, once a month, both of my kids joined me on my podcast for different reasons. My son is more drawn towards giving his money and what he, what what money can do to help, you know, have him connect with people and, and uh, he really, really gets drawn to that. So we do a, a segment on the show called The Good Word, where we share some good news that's going on in the world and maybe how people are giving their time, their energy, their money, their resources to help others thrive. And he, he really is drawn to that. And then on the other end, my daughter really loves that, Hey, when I get some money, I can get some stuff that I really like and it makes me happy. And she also understands the power of investing a little bit. So we, we do, wow, once a month we do a

money quiz on our show and, uh, she joins and answers some multiple choice questions. And whether she gets them right or wrong, I give her money at the end <laugh>, which, which makes her happy.

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([13:13](#)):

<laugh>.

Andy Hill ([13:14](#)):

So we're, I'm sneakily having some conversations about money and uh, I'm having fun at the same time. And then giving them rewards for being a part of those conversations so that in turn they can use that money to, you know, enjoy themselves and, and plan for the future where appropriate.

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([13:30](#)):

You know, one of the things I love hearing from you, Andy, is the fact that you have conversations. You know, it's such a simple concept, but you talk about it, it sounds like you talk about it with your wife, you talk about your kids, you talk about it with other people. There's such power in just having a conversation.

Andy Hill ([13:47](#)):

Absolutely. Yeah, I would say that's a, I mean, as you, as you two ladies know all, well, money is one of those taboo topics in our society that people feel like they can't talk about it. And I don't know, I think I bought a personal mission as along with a lot of us, you know, have, anybody who has a podcast about money of course, uh, is, is, is on a mission to make this less of a taboo topic cuz there's so how many issues with people in their money in our country around the world. And I think if we just opened up our, our dialogue a bit more about some of those controversial topics or difficult topics that it wouldn't become so controversial and difficult. I think that it's, it's beholden on the people who <laugh> have the interest and the ability to open our mouths about these conversations to do so in a, in a fashion that isn't intimidating is in a way that's welcoming, that makes people feel like they're more part of the conversation than outside of the conversation. Especially when there's so much jargon out there that maybe is a little intimidating. And so when we can break it down into just a normal conversation, people feel like, well, oh, I can do that, or I can move in that direction, or I can take one small step that will lead me there. I think that is, um, that's an opportunity and and it's sort of a, you know, with, with great power comes that responsibility, right? We've got these megaphones, we've got these platforms for us to speak through. I think that is our opportunity to give back in the ways that we've been given.

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([15:14](#)):

Let's talk about jargon for a minute, because you're a part of a movement called Coast Fire, those that aren't familiar with this term. Can you explain what this is and how you got involved?

Andy Hill ([15:24](#)):

Sure. Talk about jargon, right? <laugh>, I gotta, well, so, so essentially what, uh, so there's two parts to that. There's Coast fire, right? So that's, that's the word. And it comes from this movement called the fire movement. The fire movement essentially stands for financial independence retire early. So now there's lots of debate about what retiring means and all that, but I think it essentially the fire movement's all about, you know, grabbing a hold of your money today so that you can grab a hold of your time later. And so I'm, I'm a big fan of the fire movement. Yes, there's, there's any things that can go to extreme. Obviously we, we want to avoid extremes of on all, on all costs, but I think the cool thing

about Coast Fire is sort of this mid-level of fire that is not too extreme where you're over saving and then not enjoying life. Today, Coast Fire says essentially you have saved up enough money in retirement accounts called these 401ks, 403 [inaudible], Roth IRAs, IRAs, even HSAs, that you have saved so much that with time and compound interests, you will achieve your retirement goals without putting, without contributing anything else to the account or drastically decreasing how much you're putting in there. So for example, my wife and I saved a, a boatload of money up to about a half a billion dollars just before we hit 40 years old, you know, with time and compound interest. And you know, even with inflation over the years, this could be expected to be in the \$2 million range in our sixties without contributing anything else into it. And that is so relieving to, to, to me, as somebody who's stressed about money for so long, do I have to, do I keep having, having to pay into the retirement accounts? How long do I need to keep doing this? Or do I need to do this up until I'm 65 and then I can enjoy myself? Well it just allows you to breathe out a little bit more and say, oh, I've done some heavy work here, I've done some great work. I have the ability to decrease the amount of contributions that I'm doing towards my retirement, or stop them all together depending on how extreme you want to get and put that money back into enjoying life today and spending more time with my family and going on more vacations and anything else that you wanna do that makes you feel more fulfilled. And in my case, uh, the combination of hitting coast fire as well as paying off our mortgage early gave me the ability to say, well, instead of continuing to pump more money into investments and build our wealth and, you know, grow past a million dollar net worth status, why don't I just work less and enjoy my work instead of working at a job that I don't really like and I can take a chance on something that could be really great. And that's what we did. So with the combination of mortgage freedom and Coast Fire, I left my corporate event marketing job in 2020 and I've been doing my content production money coaching lifestyle for the past two, three years now. And yeah, my income is cut in half big time, but you know what, we were saving so much and now we don't need to save as much anymore.

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([18:34](#)):

So that's where this idea of coast comes in is that you saved kind of like a squirrel, you save, save saved, but now you're able to sit back and not that you're not saving, but you're enjoying that time versus I think the fire movement, it's a lot of saving it away until you hit that whatever that magical number is.

Andy Hill ([18:52](#)):

Yeah. And then stopping work altogether. But I don't really wanna stop work altogether because I enjoy work <laugh>, I enjoyed doing work that I like, you know, so I think the fire movement and traditional fire movement, it says, you know, save a 50%, 60%, 70% for a, a, a period of time, 10 years, 12 years, and then at that point, at 35 or 40, you just retire and do nothing. And that might sound great to somebody who extremely hates their job <laugh> and wants to do nothing <laugh>. Um, but I, I enjoy work, I just didn't like what I was doing. So sort of the mid level of that is, yeah, you know, have a high savings rate, that's good. Make sure you're still enjoying your life. And if you have a higher income, obviously that's easier to save more, right? But if you get to a point where you are able to dial that back from 50% savings to 20% to whatever, 5% depending on how far along you are, or 0% you can choose to change your career and do something that you like that maybe pays you less, uh, but now you have the ability to enjoy more of your time. So for me, I'm working 20 to 30 hours a week as a family finance coach, content creator, and spending more of my time focused on my health, my family, uh, being with my kids as they get older and picking them up at school and being there for the soccer games. Those are the important things for me. Not that might not translate to everybody, but I think owning my time is more important than building my large nest egg post 60, 65, 70. I, we just got to that point in our lives where that wasn't as important.

Rachael DeLeon ([20:23](#)):

What you're talking about to me feels like a more balanced lifestyle. And I think even the viewpoint of retirement, you know, even as you get older is, is starting to change. And this idea of you want to be able to live a retirement that fulfills you and that you're doing something you love, but more and more people are, are still working and doing things that fill them up in different ways, but they're not feeling prisoners to that. Because like for you, you've done the work to plant fine nest egg to get to a place where you can do those things that still fill you up as a person.

Andy Hill ([20:57](#)):

Absolutely. Yeah. I wouldn't recommend, uh, you know, stopping retirement contributions for people who haven't spent the time creating the retirement contributions because you need an income when you wanna stop working or you're forced to stop working, whether it's for, you know, management changes or, or you just, uh, you, you physically can't do it anymore in your sixties and seventies. So I am all for preparing. Uh, but once you've done the work to prepare, enjoy.

Rachael DeLeon ([21:23](#)):

Andy, at the end of all of our interviews, we always ask our guests to share their 2 cents. If you had one piece of advice to leave with our listeners, what would it be?

Andy Hill ([21:33](#)):

I would say, uh, uh, you know, a lot of the conversations that we have in the personal finance community are very numbers focused. And I know that I fall into that category a lot because I love talking about debt freedom, mortgage freedom, net worth growth, you know, coast fire, things like that. They're all numbers focused, but I think we need to make sure that they are focused around a why or a reason that you're actually doing them. Otherwise, you might get to those destinations of debt freedom, mortgage freedom, coast fire, whatever it is, and ends up being, and then look back and say, whoa, I thought I would be a lot happier than I am right now. Or why did I do this? Or maybe you're on the journey to getting to those big numbers focused destinations and you're losing motivation because you don't have that big, why, why am I working so hard to do this?

Andy Hill ([22:23](#)):

What is that gonna do for my life? How is that gonna help me become happier, you know, healthier or just being the person I want to be? So I think it's important for us to do that pre-thinking before we take that action to say, why am I doing this? And it needs to be a big why to keep moving you forward because it's gonna be a lot of work to do those big goals. So make sure you've got a reason for it, make sure you're saving for a reason, make sure you're investing for a reason, otherwise you might lose that steam.

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([22:54](#)):

Andy, thank you so much for joining us on the show today. Can you tell our listeners where they can connect with you?

Andy Hill ([22:59](#)):

Absolutely, yeah. If you're listening to this great podcast, uh, an easy way to connect with me is to type in marriage, kids and money and your favorite podcast player. And you can check out my show. I have a

weekly show where I interview really smart people who are trying to, uh, build family financial independence for their families. And then I also share advice on what's happened in our journey. So yeah, check it out, marriage, kids and Money,

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([23:21](#)):

And we'll make sure and put several of these links in the show notes as well.

Andy Hill ([23:25](#)):

Awesome. Thank you so much for having me today,

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([23:27](#)):

Rachel. It was a pleasure to have Andy on. I love listening to someone with passion and interest in personal finance, and you can hear it in his voice how excited he gets about nerding out, as he said on finances. So I think he goes well in our crowd too. We all like talking about that. The other thing that's very apparent to me is how much he likes working with people. He's a natural conversationalist and it's just fun to talk to him. One of the things that really resonated, I think in this interview more than any of the others, was conversation of really, he's a good conversationalist and someone that you want to talk with, and he very much pulled down any barriers that lay between anyone and money. It, it's something that I think is a unique skill to learn, is to be able to have conversations about difficult things.

Dr. Mary Bell Carlson ([24:19](#)):

And I feel like everything starts with a conversation, right? For you to make your next business deal. It's a conversation for you to talk about finances with your family. It's a conversation for you to teach your kids. It's a conversation. So I think that there's a lot to learn from Andy on just making it very natural and easy and commonplace just to have a conversation, even when they're hard conversations to have, make it enjoyable and still take something away from it. I mean, I love how the fact that he even has his kids, right, <laugh>, he interviews his kids and talks to his kids about money. It's a great example that you don't have to be a certain age stage of life or anything to have these conversations that just talking about it is influencing them and teaching them. And that's a great way to think about life and, and really to affect change.

Rachael DeLeon ([25:05](#)):

Mary, that really resonated with me as well. The idea of breaking down the stigma around money and just incorporating those conversations in everyday life and, and really knowing who it is you're talking to, even at his kids' level, the way he, you know, with his son, he knows that he's drawn to giving money to others. And so he sets up those conversations around money a little differently, whereas his daughter <laugh> has a catalyst, maybe it's to, to win some money <laugh> and, and kind of gamifies it. So he just has a really creative knack to how he delivers conversations around this topic and, and really has honed in on his niche, which is really great. One of the things that he said that really resonated with me, and I think I captured it, but was to grab a hold of your money today so you can grab a hold of your time later.

Rachael DeLeon ([25:57](#)):

And I really like that statement of, you know, it's never too late to start, you know, learning about your finances and getting that foundation in order and, and just what that can do for you long term. So Andy was a great guest to have on the show today. And for all of you who are listening, leave us a rating and



review, but if you wanna be on the show, you know, our guest form is on our website, so fill that out. And we have lots of great episodes ahead this season. Thanks for joining us. We'll see you next time.